

Mayor's Commission on Homelessness

Council Work Session

January 29, 2013

Steve Kay, Chair

Debra Hensley, Co-chair

Background

- Mayor's charge
 - More direct focus on and attention to issues
 - Recommendations to meet unmet need and areas identified for improvement
- Commission composed of a diverse cross-section of the community
- Met from August 15th to January 16th

National Context

- Deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill
- Decrease in funding for low-income housing
- First major federal legislation addressing homelessness in 1987
- Focus on “Housing First” and Rapid Re-housing in recent years
- Homelessness started to decrease and flat through downturn

The Need – Local Shelter System

- Current system is overwhelmed
- Emergency Shelter
 - Sleeping on floors and couches
- Recovery
 - Waiting list
- Transitional Housing
 - Waiting list
- System has capacity
 - If targeted services are provided to certain populations

The Need – Local Affordable Housing

- Lexington Housing Authority
 - 2,692 households on the waiting list
- Transitional Housing
 - Need 600 beds
- Permanent Supportive Housing - “Housing First”
 - Need 150 beds

Interventions –

- People at risk
 - Affordable housing
 - Employment support

- Families
 - Affordable housing
 - Rental assistance
 - Rapid re-housing

Interventions (cont'd) –

- **People with mental illness**
 - Housing First
 - Mental health courts
 - Street outreach

- **Chronically Homeless**
 - Housing First
 - Street outreach

Interventions (cont'd) –

- Young Adults
 - Emergency shelter
 - Transitional housing
- People with substance abuse
 - Recovery beds
 - Transitional housing
- Survivors of intimate partner violence
 - Rental assistance
 - Transitional housing

Cost of Not Intervening –

- People at risk
 - Tips individuals and families into homeless system
 - More expensive than maintaining current housing
 - Disrupts individuals and families
- Families
 - Families more expensive in shelter system
 - Impact on school system

Cost of Not Intervening (cont'd) –

- People with mental illness
 - Cycle through system
 - Cost over \$50,000 per person per year
 - Cost of intervening is @ \$20,000 per person
- Chronically homeless
 - \$42,000 per person per year
 - Most visible; cycle through system
 - Cost @ \$15,000 per person to intervene

Cost for Not Intervening (cont'd) -

- Young Adults
 - 20% of homeless population
 - If not stable now, hard to ever get stable
 - Cost \$3,500 per person to intervene
- Substance abuse
 - Effect on children
 - Recovery bed costs approximately \$15,000 a year
- Survivors of intimate partner violence
 - Disruption of individuals or families
 - Effect on school system

Recommendations

- Create a dependable revenue stream
- Create an office for implementation and coordination
- Create affordable housing units
- Additional recommendations

Create a dependable revenue stream

- Consistent and reliable funding
- Major support for recommendations
- Funds office
- Funds affordable housing units and supportive services
- Leverages:
 - Additional money for affordable housing
 - Grants
 - Public/private partnerships
 - Volunteers

Create an Office for Coordination

- Causes are complex - Solutions aren't simple
- Requires:
 - Vision
 - Consistent and deliberate planning
 - Coordination and collaboration
- Opportunities for:
 - Leveraged funding through grants
 - Public/private partnerships
 - Volunteers

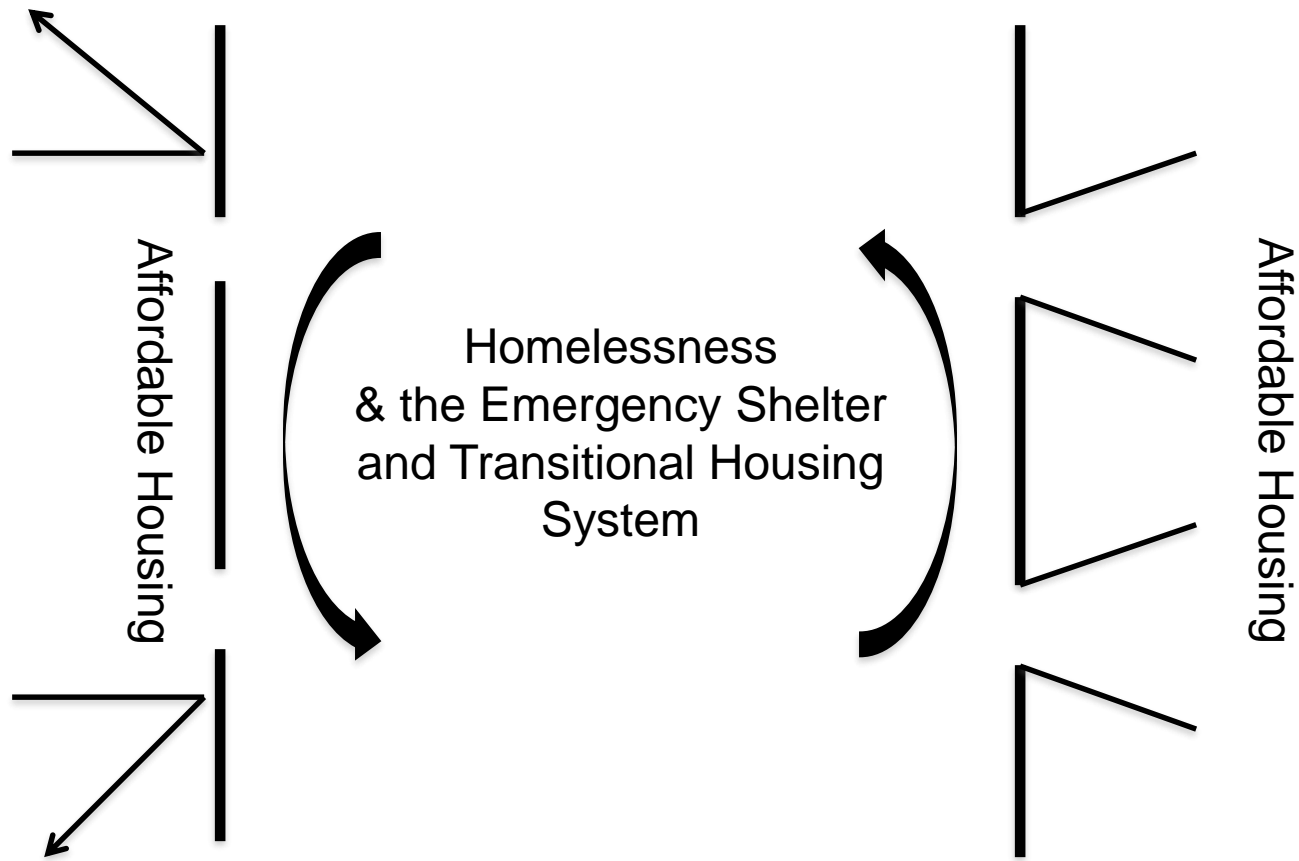
Create Affordable Housing Units

- Allows intervention in key ways
- Allows current system to operate efficiently

Additional Recommendations

- “Housing First” for mentally ill and chronically homeless
- Mental health court
- Street outreach
- Employment support
- Case management

The Role of Affordable Housing in Addressing Homelessness



Questions